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Neglected Arabia



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NEGLECTED ARABIA

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ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL MOSQUES OF BAGHDAD
(See "Baghdad, 1921")

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NEGLECTED ARABIA

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The Enemy At The Gates

DR. C. STANLEY G. MYLREA

IN the second book of Samuel, the eleventh chapter and the first verse, occurs the striking phrase "the time when kings go forth to battle." It is true that the last two words are in italics but it is almost certain that the translators had the correct idea and that the going forth was a going forth to battle. As a boy I was often amused by this delightfully naive remark on the part of the ancient historian, who hints that had it not been for certain circumstances over which kings had no control, they would have been "going forth to battle" all the year round. Just as in Russia snow and ice absolutely stop war in winter time, even so in Arabia heat and the lack of water make war almost impossible in the summer time. Then the desert is a burning fiery furnace, and though camels and men can stand a certain amount of it, horses cannot; and cavalry is the most important arm of an Arab fighting force.

The summer was dragging its weary length to a close and the thermometer had ceased to have a maximum of three figures and averaged only about 98 degrees. For weeks the people of Kuwait had been saying "When the heat passes the Ikhwan will attack us." The town had never got over the bad scare of the middle of May when the Ikhwan had attacked Salim's forces in Salim's own territory and captured their commander-in-chief besides a large number of camels and horses. Feeling against Ibn Saud who is the head of the Ikhwan movement had become bitter in the extreme. Kuwait had been defeated once and the next encounter was dreaded accordingly. The Sheikh of Kuwait is a wobbler who seldom knows his own mind. The priceless gift of tact is not his and he can neither make friends nor keep them. He is possessed of considerable personal courage but he is *not* a leader.

Kuwait was nervy and restless. The city, which has been an open town ever since it began to expand and prosper, now rapidly became "a fenced city." The Sheikh caused to be built at considerable expense (not his however), a wall 6 feet thick and 20 feet high which completely

invested the town on its landward boundaries. Where it touched the sea the wall was carried on well into the sea to prevent the enemy riding round it at low water. Platforms, where riflemen could be posted, were let into the back of the wall at frequent intervals while battlemented and loopholed forts were placed about every 300 yards. The whole work is some three miles long and was completed in a little over four months. Like Kipling's kangaroo, the Arab can be quick when "he has to." I omitted to mention the gates of which there are, of course, several, all of them massive affairs of timber and iron. The gates are also forts, for the better defense of these vulnerable points. For all its strength, however, the wall would be of no use without people to man it and so conscription was instituted and every house had to furnish so many men according to its status.

It was on the 8th of October that we first heard anything alarming. The news was to the effect that Ibn Saud's forces under Feisul Dawish were threatening Jahreh, a small town, about 18 miles west of Kuwait. Salim's men were already there—his whole fighting force—but the worrying query was "If our men are defeated, what then?" The conscription was made more rigid, there was a thorough comb out of every house and a few hundred more men were pressed into the service. The walls were manned at night and the gallant defenders kept up their courage by shouting to each other and singing war songs. Ammunition, apparently, was not considered very precious, for rifles were being loosed off all night for no reason whatever, until word was sent around that no firing was to take place without orders. Our sleep at night was fitful for our property is only about 350 yards from the western wall.

On October 10th the crisis occurred. We could hear the sound of distant firing and at once the air became charged with wildly conflicting rumours. Everyone was now thoroughly aroused and young and old, rich and poor, bond and free, streamed past our house "to reinforce those holding the wall and gates of Kuwait, for it was realized that if Salim's force should suffer defeat, Kuwait might be attacked without warning." No one was unarmed and nearly all carried Mausers with plenty of ammunition while some had swords and revolvers as well. One hardly recognized one's friends, for with short white gowns, belted with bandoliers, and with white headcloths and black headropes, people were almost transformed. About noon, the Political Agent called on us and told us that he had heard that Salim was besieged in Jahreh and was in great danger. After a short chat he and I drove over in his Ford to the Main Gate of the city. Sheikh Ahmed was there and assured us that everything was all right and that there was no cause for anxiety. The scene that confronted us, however, gave the lie to his optimism. Refugees from Jahreh and the desert were pouring in at the gate, whole families with their household effects, their camels, donkeys and dogs. A sturdy Bedou girl, her feet firmly braced against the ground, and her lithe straight figure leaning backwards at an angle of 45 degrees, strove in vain to tug an unwilling camel through the

gateway and it was only by the united efforts of several men beating it and pushing it with all their strength that the animal was eventually forced over the threshold. This incident was repeated again and again—the camel loathes gates, not to speak of needles' eyes. Each new arrival was immediately beset by questioners, all shouting at the tops of their voices, and a mere foreigner had a hard time to make anything out of the discordant medley. Sheikh Ahmed would put questions, but was constantly interrupted by anybody and everybody. There was little reverence for the person of the Sheikh even though he is the heir to the throne of Kuwait. Little black Bedou donkeys struggled manfully in, all of them grossly overloaded and mostly invisible from the amount of stuff stowed on top of them. They carried, in addition to household goods, small children, and the blind and aged. Dogs were fairly numerous and very busy and important as they trotted in with their owners. Presently some horsemen galloped in—this looked bad—but was explained away. It afterwards turned out, as one suspected at the time, that these horsemen belonged to Sheikh Salim's cavalry, acting on the principle of *sauve qui peut*. There was one dominant impression I carried away as we drove home and that was, that the town was very nearly in a panic.

At 2.00 P. M. the first wounded arrived—they were all cavalrymen and as they had not stayed to see things through, their news was not as valuable as we could have wished. As the day wore on, the fact became fairly well established that Salim with his main force was besieged in the castle of Jahreh. He had plenty of provisions but no water and things looked desperate. At nightfall we were just sitting down to dinner under the stars when there was a panic at one of the gates and the cry went round that the Ikhwan had got in. Women went silly (so we afterwards learned), and threw their jewels into wells and pits, and the town rocked with fright. I had some little difficulty in pacifying the hospital staff. I rang up the Political Agent as the row was at his end of the town, and asked him for the news. He replied that it was just a scare, some fugitives had arrived at one of the gates, and the sentries took them for Ikhwan—the mistake had been explained, however. On October 11th, reinforcements, many of them Persian coolies, Baghdadis and catch'em alive's of all descriptions were despatched to Jahreh by water in the Sheikh's launch. This action saved the day. As all the world knows, there is a lot of luck in war, and the moral effect of the arrival of a steamer, even a small one, was tremendous, coupled with the fact that some six hundred Shammari horsemen who had no love for Salim but a lot of hate for the Ikhwan, had arrived on the scene from somewhere. The Ikhwan who were the attackers and who in their fanatical zeal for death had scorned to take cover, had lost heavily and were unable to tackle the new situation, and were soon suing for peace. Peace was accordingly arranged, and the enemy departed taking their wounded with them. It had been a bloody fight, considering the numbers engaged. The Ikhwan are not supposed to have numbered more than

3,500 men but they had lost 800 killed and I have been told that they buried very nearly 800 more who died of wounds. Their wounded with no skilled medical attention, died like flies, and the story current in Kuwait which solemnly explains the high mortality among the enemy wounded, is worth recording. It appears that when the enemy were looting Jahreh while Salim was besieged in his castle, a quantity of musk was found and the Ikhwan, not knowing exactly what it was, and thinking it to be harmless perfumery, wrapped it up with the spoils and saturated all their stuff with its pungent and penetrating smell. Now among the people of Kuwait the belief is strongly held that certain aromatic odors are fatal to the healing of a wound and it is an everyday sight to see people going about with the nostrils plugged up with cotton and asafetida to keep themselves from inhaling these dangerous smells. The Ikhwan wounded had inhaled musk, therefore their wounds had festered and therefore they had died. To the man of Kuwait this is a straight example of cause and effect and admits of no argument.

So much for the enemy's losses. What about Kuwait's! With a smaller force, they got off very lightly. They had had good cover and had used it wisely with the result that they lost only 63 killed in action and about 120 wounded. Most of these latter arrived on October 11th but the worst cases were brought by water and did not reach us till the following day. Nearly all of them came to the American Hospital and I am glad to say that we lost only four of them. The injuries were, of course, various, some insignificant and some very grave. On October 12th, Dr. Mackenzie, of the New York delegation, arrived and he was able to see our small hospital justifying its existence. I was somewhat put out at the way in which the Sheikh took everything for granted, no messages of sympathy and no suggestion of offering assistance of any kind whatever. There was plenty of pious talk and when the twentieth prominent man had told me how God would reward us, and so on, and so on, I boiled over and said "That's all very fine, talk is the cheapest thing in the world. You people pile all this work on me, but it never occurs to one of you to do anything or to help either financially or in kind. In my country, the rulers would be the first to visit the wounded and to do all in their power to see the sufferers have every attention. Here the Sheikh's slaves dump helpless men on the hospital verandah and that is all there is to it—no thought of how my small staff is to cope with all this extra work." I said a good deal more in the same strain. The shaft went home and the next day things began to happen. It was in the morning and I was in the operating room, when one of the leading men of the town, a man who has been a bitter enemy of the American Mission in the past, asked if he might come in. There were tears in his eyes as he handed me a bag containing Rs. 500, and what he said will live long in my memory. It was as gracious a little speech as I had ever listened to. Within three days, I had had 600 pounds rice given me and cash to the amount of Rs. 6,100. "Rebuke a wise man

and he will love thee" was the moral I got out of it. The Sheikh, however, had no part in any of this, nor did he ever recognize in any way what the American Hospital had done for his people. His eldest son, however, contributed Rs. 600.

In the meantime, the town began to grow restless over the possibility of another attack which they fully expected would this time fall on Kuwait itself. On the 18th of October, a deputation arrived from the enemy and gave Salim what amounted to an ultimatum. A council of the chief men of the city was held and Salim was more or less forced, against his own inclinations, to make a formal request to the British Government for assistance. H. M. S. *Espiegle* was already here and the R. I. M. S. *Lawrence* arrived on the 21st. An aeroplane also arrived on the 21st and a reconnaissance was made in the afternoon to endeavor to locate the enemy. The pilot failed to find them, however, so I asked if I might go out next time, as I knew the country. The offer was accepted and next day at noon, I went up in a D. H. 9. This time we found the enemy all right, counted their tents and generally sized them up. They fired on us but we jumped up to 5,000 feet and nothing hit us. We also dropped a letter for them from the British Government which was afterwards acknowledged by the enemy. On the same day, the 22nd of October, H. M. S. *Ivy* came in with the Acting Civil Commissioner of Iraq on board, Sir Arnold Wilson. He at once held a council on board the "*Espiegle*" at which were present, the Senior Naval Officer of the Persian Gulf and the commanders of the various warships in the harbor, also the Political Agent of Kuwait, also the airman and myself. Plans were made, covering all possible contingencies, including the evacuation of the wounded and the British subjects in the town, besides matters of defence and stores. Sir Arnold returned to Basrah next morning by aeroplane. On the 24th of October, everything was quite ready and on the same day the Ikhwan envoys left Kuwait. The town now calmed down, it had thrown its responsibilities onto the British and was breathing easily. The British were, of course, relying on Salim's co-operation had hostilities recommenced but it is doubtful if they would have had a whole-hearted co-operation. Their idea seemed to be "Let's sit still and see how the British do this job." Sir Arnold Wilson looked in once more on the 24th but only stayed overnight. On the 27th of October, the Wing Commander flew down from Baghdad, accompanied by a second machine. I was asked to go out with him, which I was glad to do and we were able to establish the fact that the enemy had left their camp and though we flew a long way beyond their camp, we failed to sight them. The enemy had therefore cleared out. Another aeroplane reconnaissance was made on the 31st of October and again no trace was found of the Ikhwan. One by one, the warships left and last of all, on the 6th of November, the "*Espiegle*" left. The danger is over for the present, but the causes which produced the battle of Jahreh are still in existence, and those causes cannot easily be removed. Chief among those causes are territorial ambition and religious fanaticism.

THE RECRUITS OF 1921



RUTH JACKSON
Westfield, N. J.



RACHEL JACKSON
Westfield, N. J.



CORNELIA DALENBERG
South Holland, Ill.

The Misses Jackson are already known to readers of "Neglected Arabia." In 1918 they went out to Arabia and for a year served as honorary missionaries in the Girls' School at Basrah. Returning to America in 1920 they volunteered for full time service in the same year and now go out as regularly appointed missionaries of the Board.

Miss Cornelia Dalenberg is a trained nurse of three years' experience in the West Side Hospital, Chicago. Her home church at South Holland, Illinois has already pledged her full support, and she therefore goes out with strong backing at home to the medical work which has been so peculiarly effective in Arabia.

Intolerance In Inland Arabia

DR. LOUIS PAUL DAME

WHEN important events are taking place it adds to one's interest considerably to have met some of the actors, especially so if some of these actors are playing a leading role. And anyone at all familiar with affairs in Arabia at present is only too keenly aware of the fact that the Ikhwan and their political leader Abdul Aziz, Ibn Saud, the Sheikh of Nejd, are drawing considerable attention. A trip to Riadh the capital of Nejd at any time would be interesting but at the present time is doubly so.

On November seventeenth, with Ali and Mohammed, two of Dr. Harrison's Moslem assistants, I left Bahrein in a native sailboat carry-



THE HARBOR OF OJEIR

ing rice to Ojeir, the port of entry for Hassa and Nejd. From Ojeir we rode on donkeys to Hofhuf, the capital of Hassa. We rode from late afternoon until about mid-forenoon the next day. The thing I best remember of that ride is that the night was cold and long. Anyone who thinks that the Arabian desert does not get cold I invite to take that ride during winter with a north wind blowing.

In Hofhuf we called on the Sheikh, Abdulla Ibn Jaloovie, cousin and appointee of Ibn Saud. There is probably no more interesting figure in all Arabia than this man. Hassa was formerly anything but safe for

life or property but now, thanks to his swift, stern, and sometimes cruel judgment, it is as safe as the average rural district at home. The present crime waves in New York and Chicago would have a sudden slump if punishment were as sure as it is in Hassa. Ibn Jaloie is a firm believer in "spare not the rod" nor does he forget the lash and sword. He has done such a thorough job educating his subjects to a life of rectitude and respect for their neighbors' property that now he has little to do along that line.

It is said that when eight years ago he was appointed by Ibn Saud his executioner had a task to perform almost daily. Some of the leading citizens complained to Ibn Saud about this. Upon inquiry he received the following answer from Ibn Jaloie, "If you like, you are welcome to come and rule this obstreperous place yourself and I will change places with you in Riadh." He retained his place in Hassa. How well I remember the fixed gaze of his small black eyes upon me as I thought, "this is that terrible Ibn Jaloie, the terror of all the Bedouins."

From Hassa we travelled per camel to Riadh. We had five camels for ourselves and cases of supplies and two Bedouins were our guides. What a waste the desert is! Not till the evening of the fifth day did we arrive at a habitable place, and that only a temporary one.

Abu Jafahn is the name of a group of wells in a stony part of the desert. It was dark when we arrived but by the light of the moon we could see hundreds of camels lying all around, small camp-fires glowing and groups of Bedouins around each one. Here, as everywhere, my men tried to persuade me to keep in the background, to cover up my American clothes, especially my leggings, with my Arab *abba* for here were many Bedouins and a Bedouin in Nejd is an Ikhwan, and an Ikhwan is the most bigoted and intolerant individual on earth.

We soon had our place picked out and a fire made and food cooked, while visitors came constantly to drink our coffee and tea and to see the stranger. And strange to say each one had some ailment. However bigoted these people may be, they cannot entirely hide their natural childlikeness and curiosity. They will manufacture some complaint just to see the doctor and have him tell them something or give them medicine.

The next morning we left the wells with a large caravan also going to Riadh. They carried rice and piece goods and had been travelling for fifteen days from Hassa. This part of the desert is quite hilly and we reached the highest part shortly after leaving Abu Jafahn. To the right of the road was a deep valley with a precipitous and rocky path downwards. Ahead the road was winding, descending so steeply that the camel men had to stand at each bend to guide the animals as they cautiously went down with the heavy packs on their backs.

Our camels were right behind the other caravan and as several of their camels had stopped and were obstructing the road, one of our Bedouins called to one of the men to get his camels out of the way.

In answer he glared at me and then like a clock that was well wound up he began a lengthy speech. His text was, "Is not this road the road of the Mussulman?" And nothing more typical of a Mohammedan's attitude could one experience.

Just a week and a day after we had left Hassa, exactly at noon we came to a little hill and looking ahead we saw Riadh lying in the distance. The tops of the many date trees hid practically all the city and were pleasant to see. Oh, how beautiful was the sight of something green after having spent eight days in a desert waste. Nothing ever seemed so green before. And as we drew near and saw the wheat and alfalfa growing among the date gardens it seemed as though we had been delivered from captivity.

The city of Riadh is enclosed by a square mud wall about twenty feet high which has many small loop holes for rifles. Four gates, one on each side, permit entrance. It is by no means a large city, each wall being about half a mile long. The permanent population is approximately three thousand but there is of course a very large floating populace.

Two things stand out prominently to a stranger—it is a city of idlers, and the Ikhwan are the predominating influence.

There are, of course, a few people who work, and the busiest person of all is the Sheikh himself. Sheikh Abdul Aziz is by far the finest Arab I have met. He is at least six feet two, powerfully built, possessing a most intelligent face and a very charming smile. He is most kindly in his bearing. There is never any mistaking the man. And he is not an idler. He sits in a *mejlis* (reception room, of which he has many), and receives his subjects, rich or poor, Bedouin or townsman; all can come and present their troubles or their gifts. Then he sits in his office, where he keeps four secretaries busy, and reads the official mail and dictates his affairs. The Arab is not naturally a democrat, but there is a democratic spirit to this government. It has much of the old patriarchal type.

The idlers I learned to despise. It is said that about seventy per cent. of the population live at the expense of the Sheikh. Of course, a large number of these are servants and retainers of various kinds, but quite a number are of the royal family, not the immediate family but distantly connected and like to flaunt their royalty. An illustration may describe the type. One evening I was called out to see a little colored girl. Among the many in the room was a young man about twenty who attracted my attention by his profuse greetings. I immediately put him down as wanting something. As we left the house he walked down the street with us and told one of my assistants that he wanted the doctor to call at his house some time to examine him. The next evening as I was starting out on another call, a servant came saying I was wanted in a certain Saud house. My assistant whispered to me that it was for the young fellow we had spoken to the night before. I told the servant that since his master was not sick in bed, he could come to me at the hospital where I held a clinic every morning, since

I had so much work to do I could only go to see those who were unable to come to the clinic. The servant went off and returned shortly with his master who remonstrated greatly at the indignities thus heaped upon him. "He was a Saud, he was of the royal family (albeit a forty-second cousin or less), he could not come to the clinic in the morning, he could not walk the street and turn into the hospital door and have the people of the town see that he, a Saud, had gone to see the doctor." I might say that the Sheikh himself once visited the hospital and his sons were there several times to see me professionally.

The idlers are a despicable lot. All they do is to stand in the most prominent places in the mosque to say their prayers and in between times they sit around and drink coffee and visit the various wives they keep. Work is beneath their dignity, but if the Sheikh should cut them off his list of retainers they would be paupers.

Another of this type once came running after me in the street. He, like so many others, would not deign to speak to me, but began making motions, pointing to his nose, which was very much swollen. But I asked him to explain what he wanted. Then he started to whisper but I told him he must talk as I could not hear. And then he really did speak and asked for some medicine. I explained that I did not give medicines on the street; if he were willing I would call on him at his home or if he did not want me there I would be glad to have him come to see me at the hospital. He was the father of a girl with a very badly infected old burn whom I went to see almost daily. I asked him if he had seen the improvement his daughter was making. "No, oh, no, he did not go to see her; there used to be such a bad smell in the room that he did not care to go near her.

The Arabs are usually noted for their hospitality, but most of those I met in Riadh were anything but hospitable to me, a "kaffir." At the house of the little girl mentioned above, for instance, my greetings and farewells were never answered. Three times I called on the chief secretary of the Sheikh and fortunately relieved him of something from which he had suffered severely. He always greeted me with a smile and nod but the usual greeting, "Peace be upon thee" he would not give me, and although we were in his *mejlis* and the customary Arab coffee was ready, never was I offered a cup.

A like spirit was constantly shown by the townspeople when I met them on the street. True, some would greet me cordially, but most of them, even though I treated them daily in the hospital would turn their heads as I passed by, or conveniently not hear my greetings, or probably mumble something to themselves. This attitude is partly due to their fear of the Ikhwan.

The floating population is largely made up of Bedouins. Groups large and small come and go daily from all parts of Ibn Saud's realm, which is attaining larger proportions all the time. Gifts are bestowed upon these Bedouins with a lavish hand. A change of clothing, probably of the same type that Joseph gave his brethren, is given to those who need it, and they all do. All dine at the Sheikh's

expense and gifts of rice, dates and *dihn* (clarified butter) are given upon their departure.

In one of the rooms of the castle I was shown eighteen large tanks, each about five feet in diameter and six feet in height, every one full of *dihn*. In a courtyard adjoining this room is a large caldron full of *dihn* with a fire beneath it constantly, from which skins and tins are filled for departing guests. It is to a large degree by means of such generosity that a great Arab Sheikh maintains his hold upon the wandering tribes of the desert.

But unfortunately a Bedouin of Nejd has practically ceased to be himself. He is now not primarily a Nejd-y and a Bedouin but he is an Ikhwan, and an Ikhwan is probably the most intolerant zealot that history has yet produced. It would be hard to find another group in whom ignorance and bigotry are combined to such a marked degree. Not only is a Christian doomed to perdition in their eyes but all who are not Ikhwan likewise. The best Mohammedan who knows the Koran from memory, is faithful in his prayers and has made a trip to Mecca is but a son of the devil if he does not wear the *amama*, a broad white band worn around the head which is the insignia of the Ikhwan.

The sword, the usual Moslem weapon of propaganda, is also freely used by the Ikhwan. Constant raids are being made on adjoining tribes and towns that have not yet adopted the Ikhwan insignia. They are almost always victorious for it is said that they number between 75,000 and 100,000 strong. A conquered tribe is looted, part of the spoil going to the Ikhwan and part to the Sheikh. The conquered territory comes under the rule of Ibn Saud. At present it would probably be difficult to say whether the desire for loot or new "converts" is the stronger. During my six weeks' stay in Riadh we heard the victory cry once or twice each week as a group of Ikhwan soldiers with swords and guns strapped to their camels, came through the gate and marched towards the castle.

In spite of all their hatred for a *Naserany* (Christian) they came in large numbers for treatment, and twice I was called to one of their tents outside the town. But they were not exactly over-cordial. Many, if not most of them, would refuse to talk to me, trying to make me understand by signs what their ailment was. If one had some trouble with his eyes he would pull down his lower lids with his fingers and stare at me. It usually took a minute or two before they could be induced to speak. Some of those we operated on refused to talk to me as I visited them in the ward daily.

One man came to see me about an old crippled hand. I held his hand as I examined it and still held it as he rose to go and gave him the customary farewell. He did not answer and I held his hand and repeated it several times. Then he turned and remarked, "I say that to a Mussulman, not to you."

When I met any Ikhwan on the street they invariably recognized me in spite of my wearing a big black beard, the Arab headdress and

abba which covered my American suit entirely. Then I usually heard, "Ya kaffir!" "The curse of God be on the kaffir!" "God kill the kaffir!" "Dog!" etc.

Once while on the way to the castle, a group of about twenty Ikhwan were just coming out of a mosque. They were strung out over several rods length of the road. As I caught up behind them the last one spied me and gave the signal to the ones ahead so that I had the pleasure (?) of running the gauntlet the entire length. I never knew that so many people in one place were so anxious that God curse and kill me. Strange to say, though, when I came back two or three of that same group followed me right into the hospital for medicine.

My two assistants who pride themselves on being good Mohammedans were also called "kaffir" at every opportunity. Even while praying in the mosque some of our Ikhwan friends turned around and called them, "kaffir." On our return trip we had three Ikhwan as our guides, but they were given instructions by a fellow Ikhwan in our presence not to eat or drink with us as that was unlawful, we were unclean. They were perfectly willing to eat all we gave them but never would they eat near us. One of these fellows was particularly impossible because he had learned about ten lines of the Koran and knew the prayers. When he found out that Mohammed, my assistant, could read and knew the Koran, he begged him for lessons, but he did not hesitate to call him an unbeliever because he was not an Ikhwan.

One of my tasks was to make almost daily calls at the castle to treat members of the Sheikh's family. Among the women in the *harem* were three Armenian girls. These with nineteen others were captured and sent to Riadh a few years ago, the spoils of a massacre. The Sheikh has distributed them among his favorites, for a white girl is a great prize to an Arab. Six of these girls have been given to negroes.

No one can begin to guess as to what proportions the Ikhwan movement will grow. The recent attack on Kuwait, the rumor of a move on Hail and the Shemmer country, the reported attack on Taif near Mecca, all mean that the Ikhwan are reaching out in all directions.

The gospel of Christ is knocking at the door of inland Arabia where intolerance supreme prevails with its attendant fanaticism, hatred and ignorance. The struggle will be long, no doubt, and hard, very hard, but when the victory comes, how glorious! When this misdirected zeal is turned to zeal for the Master and they learn to serve Him, what a great day shall dawn for Arabia!

Therefore let us not be discouraged even in the face of these great obstacles but labor on, believing, hoping, trusting. We, on the field, can keep on working in spite of threats and curses; are you in the homeland behind us with your prayers and support?

Baghdad, 1921

REV. JAMES CANTINE, D.D.

THE readers of *Neglected Arabia* may have heard of the plans which are being considered by the Mission Boards of the Reformed-Presbyterian Churches in America, looking towards their occupation of Upper Mesopotamia, left vacant by the recent withdrawal of the English Church Missionary Society. It was considered advisable by them, as well as by our own missionaries, whose territory is adjacent on the South, that there be no interval during which there should be no resident missionary at Baghdad; and a tentative appointment was made at our last Annual Conference, which was hoped would be preparatory to the permanent organization in America of missionary effort for this large area. My wife and I reached Baghdad just before Christmas and before their last missionary had left, giving us ample time to talk about the work, officially to take over the care of their property, and to be accepted as their successors in the oversight of the Protestant school and congregation.

Before speaking about the present opportunity it may not be amiss to give my impressions of what has been done in the past by the Church Missionary Society, or as it is usually referred to, the C. M. S. These go back to the summer of 1891, when at Bushire, on the Persian Gulf, somewhat discouraged in my quest along the East side of Arabia for a suitable place at which to inaugurate the work of the Arabian Mission, I received a cordial letter from a Dr. Eustace, a missionary of that Society, but temporarily resident physician for the English community at Basrah, inviting me to visit him, and later arranging for me to go to Baghdad and confer with his colleagues there. At Baghdad I met Dr. Sutton and Rev. (later Bishop) Stileman, who gave me the assurance that they would be very glad to have us as neighbors on the South. Other visits at intervals and a personal acquaintance with most of their workers have enabled me to keep somewhat in touch with missionary developments here.

I think that my C. M. S. friends will agree with me in saying that Baghdad and Upper Mesopotamia have never been adequately manned by their Society. Occupied first by missionaries from Persia, who recognized the great need for doing something for the immense numbers of Persians annually visiting and colonizing the religious shrines in the neighborhood, it was for years only an out-station of their Persia field, their nearest fellow-workers being at Isfahan, three weeks or more distant by caravan. When it finally was set apart as an independent Mission, its development was almost entirely on medical lines, and the absence of a systematic, continuous evangelistic and educational effort, militated against what we have been accustomed to hear spoken of during the war, the "organization of the ground gained." Sickness, death and transfer often left Dr. and Mrs. Sutton the only

workers in this vast area, and what had been laboriously attained was lost and had to be striven for again. What seemed to be the policy of the C. M. S. at the time—not to invest money in ground and buildings—denied them that position in the community, that appearance of stability and assurance for the future, which is not alone such a comfort and help to the workers, but which also does so much in these Oriental lands to prepossess in their favor the powers that be and the people whom they are to reach. Before the war this policy was changed, ground just outside the city was purchased and the opening of hostilities found a large and beautiful hospital building nearing completion. Years of neglect and use by the military have nearly wrecked this, and the decision of the C. M. S. to give up this field leaves their successors with but few material things to build upon.

The native Protestant community is mainly composed of families who at one time or another have come down from the North, where American societies for many decades have been laboring among the Syrians, Armenians and Nestorians. The fewness of their evangelistic workers probably accounts for so little constructive effort, such as helping them to a permanent place of worship and an independent pastorate, having been made by the Mission for them. Both for their own sakes, and because they are representatives of Protestantism and past missionary effort, they are well worth our sympathy and help in making of them a self-sustaining Church. Through their long years of association with the missionaries of the Church of England, they have become accustomed to that form of worship, which is now observed in their Sunday services. Through the courtesy of the Church of England Chaplain these are held in the Garrison Church. He also administers their sacraments. While we attend these services, I take no official part, other than preaching for them at regular intervals. The support of their denominational school absorbs much of their financial ability which might well be used in their church life, if ever the Government inaugurates public schools to which they would feel free to send their children.

At present in the public schools the Muslim faith and practice are taught and Friday observed instead of Sunday. While concessions in these matters are, of course, made to Christian children who may attend, yet the Protestants, as do the other Christian sects, prefer to keep up their own schools. Last year they received a grant of Rs. 2,000 from the Government; Rs. 1,000 from the C. M. S.; Rs. 600 from the Garrison Church; and the remainder of their budget was made up from fees and direct gifts from the congregation. It is a question how much of a missionary asset such a school is where there are no Muslim children, but at present I am giving them a little of my time and will await future developments.

I scarcely think any other Protestant organization will begin work in Baghdad, except perhaps the London Society for the Jews, who are said to be about to reopen their Mission here. They certainly will have a large and needy field, and we will give them a hearty welcome.

The British and Foreign Bible Society have recently reorganized their work in Mesopotamia, with an Agent resident at Baghdad. He has come with experience gained in Egypt and Palestine and we may hope for the most friendly co-operation. The Y. M. C. A. here is the English organization, primarily working with and for the Expeditionary Force. The opening of Y. M. C. A. work for the natives of the country on lines that have proved so successful in India and other countries has been urged upon both the American and British Associations, but will probably have to await the settlement of political questions relating to this area.

There was recently a conference in Egypt, where the future relationship of Great Britain to Mesopotamia was the subject of consideration. By the time this letter reaches its readers they may know more about that conference than I do now, but it seems to me that the best interests of the people, and this is the aim of all Missions, will not be furthered by any lessening of British oversight and responsibility. As regards the "powers that be," our relations seem to be all that could be desired. They have said that "the advent of the Arabian Mission to Baghdad will be very welcome," and they have been most considerate in their treatment of all mission matters that have come to their attention. The officials of the Arab Government and the people at large, in so far as I have had opportunity to meet them, have been very cordial. Except among the Armenians, who think that they have been betrayed, it is something of an asset to be an American, and that will always be in our favor in the future development of our work. I have not been able to answer very definitely the questions that have been asked me regarding our future activities, as all that awaits mission organization and plans at home, but there is no reason to doubt that here, as in our field in the South, most departments of work, if undertaken carefully and sympathetically, will be tolerated and perhaps encouraged. It is our purpose in the months just before us to gain as wide an outlook upon the opportunities not alone in Baghdad but throughout all Mesopotamia, as may be possible.

I may not close this letter without saying how much we have appreciated the fellowship of Dr. and Mrs. MacDowell, now in Relief Work and domiciled in Baghdad; and of meeting the other Persia missionaries who on account of disturbances in Russia and Turkey have been compelled to pass to and from their field via Baghdad. We are looking forward to a closer acquaintance and possible co-operation in the not distant future. It is also a pleasure to say how much we are indebted to the courtesy and kindness of the American Consul, making us feel, these first months, less as "strangers in a strange land."

From our viewpoint in Mesopotamia the one thing now needful is much prayer that wisdom and courage be given your representatives at home and abroad, that the doors now opening may not be closed, and that it may be God's purpose to give through us a rich blessing to the people living "between the two rivers."

The Log of the *Barala*

(*Concluded from previous issue*)

REV. T. H. MACKENZIE, D.D.

Oct. 7.—As the voyage from Debai to Bahrein takes twenty-six hours we spent the entire day at sea, with nothing especially eventful to record. We had a cool night at Debai but it got hot enough during the day and the night of the 7th was melting.

Oct. 8.—We reached Bahrein about eleven in the morning. The air was so hazy that we could not see the coast until we were nearly there. The name Bahrein means "The two seas" and it was originally applied to a considerable section of Arabia but is now restricted to this little group of islands. The largest, on which our missionaries are located, is about thirty miles long by twelve wide. Separated from it by a shallow channel about three miles wide is the island of Moharrek, where the ruling sheikh and many of the aristocracy live. There are several other small islands inhabited, some of them separated from their neighbors only at high tide.

It was to Bahrein that S. M. Zwemer came in the early days of the Arabian Mission. He found it hard to get a footing, being repulsed from the island several times before he was finally allowed to stay. The British agent in those days was a Persian, who was unfriendly, and there were then no Europeans living in Bahrein. Zwemer became the subject of international correspondence between Lord Salisbury and Richard Olney in the course of which Olney uttered his famous dictum: "We ask no greater privileges for missionaries than for merchants, but at the same time we insist that they shall have no less."

The anchorage is about five miles out from the shore for the harbor is very shallow. Before we dropped anchor we sighted a sailboat coming out to meet us in which we recognized Pennings, Miss Van Pelt and Dr. Dame. They came on board and had tiffin with us before we went ashore. Chamberlain and Harrison did not wait, however, as they were anxious to get started for Hassa today, if possible. The rest of us waited until the luggage of those of our party who were to stay in Bahrein could be collected and transhipped. The missionaries have to travel with a good deal of luggage, as indeed nearly everybody does in India and the Near East. You carry your own bedding with you and when the Arabian missionaries are in India on holiday they stock up with the amount of certain classes of supplies which will be required for two years' use. The Harrisons, for example, had thirty-one packages but some of them were housekeeping stuff for the Pennings and additional articles for Dame. The last time the Van Ess's came from America they had one large trunk which contained nothing but articles they had been asked to bring out to their fellow-missionaries.

We had quite an easy trip in with a good breeze and made the distance in fifty minutes. Sometimes when there is no breeze and they have to row it takes three hours or even longer. The harbor is very shallow. You can see bottom most of the way and for considerable distances the boat must be propelled by poling. In former times it was necessary to land on the backs of donkeys but now a good pier has been built so we escaped the donkey. Bahrein has recently been visited by one of the Standard Oil Company's fine new boats "The Tiger" and we saw lying on the pier a quantity of boxes bearing the familiar inscription "The Standard Oil Company of New York." It looked good.

The walk from the pier to the Mission property took us through the city along little winding streets alternating with large open spaces. The houses were many of them large, yet with no pretensions to external beauty; most not more than two stories in height, white and made out of some sort of plaster cement. There were also numerous houses of a poorer type built from the leaves of the date palm. The streets were quite clean and there were few smells. We were told that this is due to the fact that through the influence of the British Political Agent a municipality has been organized and its first activity has been a thorough cleaning up, so radical that missionaries in our party from other stations declared that Bahrein was scarcely recognizable. Bahrein has one great advantage: the alkaline character of its soil and dust makes fleas impossible.

Our walk took us past the first home of our missionaries and the building where they once conducted a school. It is now used for a Moslem school. We passed also the home of another recent comer to Bahrein—a branch of the Eastern Bank. The first of the Mission buildings which we saw was the church with its square clock tower. The figures on the clock dial are Arabic but the clock keeps time according to the Western fashion. (The Arabs count sunset as twelve o'clock.) In the same compound with the church is the Harrisons' house. Next to the church on the other side and in the same general compound, though with a separate entrance, stands the Mason Memorial Hospital. We went through it—that is we went through the men's side, the woman's side is not entered by men. It is a two-story building with the patients in the rooms and on the veranda of the second floor. They are handicapped in keeping it clean by the fact that water cannot be used on the floors and they must be cleansed by sweeping. Still it is in as good condition as is practical and is doing a lot of sound and helpful work. We found it rather full and Dame, whose job is language study, has had to do a good deal of operating. The patients I saw were there for leg sores, gun shot wounds and a number of cases of hernia. About one-half of the major operations performed in the hospital last year were for hernia, not because that trouble is so abnormally prevalent but because the hospital has acquired so wide spread a reputation for its treatment and care. Patients come from long distances, a great many of them from Persia. The warmth of

the welcome the patients gave Harrison as they saw him for the first time in nearly four months told its own story.

We now went on to the other Mission compound near at hand. We found at the gate a small house built as a mejlis (meeting place) and within the large Mission House were accommodations for two missionary families and the Zenana workers. We took tiffin with the Pennings. Their dining-room was still gay with some of the wedding finery, including a Punkah prettily decorated with tissue paper in white and gold. Our food included the large yellow mellons, Arab bread in large well browned disks, pomegranates and fresh dates.

About five o'clock I set out with Pennings to call on Major Dixon, the Political Agent. The Consular office is down on the seashore, the wireless close at hand. The house is large and as comfortable as may be. At the side is a tennis court where the foreign community are invited for tennis on Friday afternoons. Major Dixon is a fine specimen of British Political Agent, a class of men for whom I have conceived a great admiration. He was born in the East and has passed most of his life here, but is a graduate of Oxford. He has seen service in India. He is a member of a family in which the British Civil Service is a tradition. Major Dixon was present at a conference held about a week ago between Sir Percy Cox, who was on his way up the Gulf, and Ibn Saud. Dixon and Sir Percy crossed to Ojeir in a government launch to meet the famous Arab chief. The two great powers in central Arabia for centuries have been those of Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid. The former has his capital in Riadh; the latter's sphere of influence is back of Kuwait. At the interview of which I speak Major Dixon secured from Ibn Saud and Sir Percy permission for Chamberlain and Harrison to make their trip to Hassa.

We stayed at the Consulate until dark and then walked back to the Mission House and had dinner with the Dames. After dinner Pennings took me over to the mejlis which he holds once a week. Because of the heat it was held out doors, rugs and cushions being spread on the ground. There were about twenty Arabs present. I was seated next a young Arab named Mohammed Yateem, who has a fluent knowledge of English and with whom I could talk easily. He was a Bahrein boy in whom the Calverley's were much interested when they were here and he seems devoted to them. He is a well built and handsome young fellow with pleasing features, but I suspect that he is not very industrious. He has interesting and amazing stories to tell of his war experiences. He was in Baghdad when Turkey entered the war and was arrested on charge of being a British spy. He was tortured, burned in the hand and flogged to make him confess. He was then sent as a prisoner to various parts of the country, among others to Beirut where he had been a student in pre-war days. He escaped but was recaptured, tried twice by court martial and sentenced to death, but was spared through the intervention of friends. On the armistice he was released and joined the British army, taking a Christian name and living as a Christian. He was in Salonika for a

time and then in London. He has been back in Bahrein, where his father and brother are in business, for about six months. He is not an active Moslem and does not go to mosque. Says that he would like to be a Christian but that in this place it is impossible. I did not see much evidence of Christianity in him but clearly he has no Moslem faith. I talked for about an hour with him and promised to come and see pearls at the family shop tomorrow.

Oct. 9.—About half past six Major Dixon came round with his Essex motor car to take me out to Ali to see the famous tombs of Bahrein, one of the great archeological mysteries of the world. Calverley, Pennings and Van Ess were of the party. The drive was a novel and interesting one. The whole of Bahrein is a sandy plain



THE WEEKLY MARKET. RUINS OF THE MOSQUE IN BACKGROUND

except where it is watered by the flowing wells that are in themselves a good deal of a geological mystery. Naturally there were few roads and the drives where it is possible to take a motor car are limited. This particular road was built through the activity of a former British Political Agent who used prisoners for the labor. The present Sultan has two cars and is therefore interested in getting more roads.

About three miles out we came on two high minarets, all that is left of a great Persian mosque which stood on this site some seven centuries ago. The city was then located at this point and Arab conservatism is seen in the fact that the great weekly market is still

held here although there is not a human habitation in sight. The two most interesting sights of the ride were the flowing wells and the date gardens. These latter are very large and must furnish a refreshing shade from the sun. The date palms have to be pollenized by hand in order to secure a satisfactory crop. Many of the gardens in Bahrein have been much neglected because of the centering of interest upon the pearl fishery.

The wells are clear pools of beautiful water bubbling up in the sand. The water is transparent but with a slight greenish cast like the waters of the Jade Fountain near Pekin. From each well there flows a stream of the same clear character. Many of the wells are brackish but the best of them furnish the water supply for the island. We passed a number of camels bringing in full water skins. This water carried in from the desert was formerly used by our missionaries, but has become so expensive that they are now using water from wells in the sea which are exposed at low tide. The donkeys and camels that we met as we drove along were considerably agitated at the sight of an automobile. The camels galloped out into the desert while the donkeys' drivers descended and held them by main strength until we were safely by.

The tombs at Ali are about seven miles out. We could see them for some distance situated along a ridge in the centre of the island. One of their greatest marvels is their number. They occupy a rectangle of land about ten miles by four. They have never been counted but estimates of their number vary from two hundred thousand to four hundred thousand. Only a very few of them have ever been opened. They are circular or oval mound-like structures about twenty feet in height. We went into three of them. One we entered laterally from the ground and another from a hole that had been opened rather more than half way up. The interior of the tombs is a vault of stone masonry with niches in the walls, from three to five in each, for the reception of bodies. Above these niches there were holes in the wall apparently designed to support some canopy or covering for the dead. Some of the stones of which these vaults are constructed are very large and it must have taken considerable engineering skill to get them in place. There are no circular arches; all the masonry is on straight lines. Surrounding and covering the vault on all sides is, first masonry in which small stones are embedded, and then above and around this a covering three or four feet thick of very small bits of stone, apparently chipped by human agency. This stone is a hard flint none of which is to be found in the immediate neighborhood, though a somewhat similar stone is said to enter into the structure of the highest hill on the island (altitude about seven hundred feet). No evidence of any extensive quarrying has, however, been discovered in that vicinity. The work in making one of these tombs must have been tremendous. I do not believe a hundred men could do it in less than three months and when one remembers that there are several hundred thousand of them the puzzle is very great. And more than this, the building of these tombs must have been expensive. They could only have been prepared for

the rich and powerful. Where a sufficient number of such to occupy them could be found in this vicinity is an equally hard nut to crack. Archeologists are agreed that they date from at least three thousand years before the Christian era and are consequently pre-Semitic. The Bahrein islands lie on the main track from Mesopotamia and Syria to India. Were these islands once a sacred place to which citizens of a pre-Babylonian civilization brought their dead? I do not suppose that archeological remains of so great an extent remain practically unexplored anywhere else in the world. Doubtless some day they will be thoroughly studied and the result may be to push the history of the world an age further back than has been done by the explorations in the Euphrates valley.

Returning, I had breakfast at the Pennings and afterward went to see the church and school, which are in one building, the church on the second floor and the two-roomed school on the first. The church auditorium is plain but dignified. They hold an Arabic service Sunday morning, an English service in the afternoon and a song service in Arabic in the evening. The school is rather small. They use only one room and one teacher who also serves as language teacher for the new missionaries. The old and very competent language teacher who had been with the Mission almost since its beginning recently died and it is an open question whether the language students should continue to reside in Bahrein where we have more ample housing accommodations or in Kuwait where the health conditions are better.

Then we went down to the bazaars. They are very large and covered with dried date palm leaves to keep out the sun; have narrow and completely covered streets running at right angles. The vegetable and food bazaars were especially interesting as are also the coffee shops. On the way down we stopped at the Bahrein Bible Shop, which is near, but not in, the bazaar district. While walking through the bazaars we fell in with Mohammed Yateem who accompanied us to the shop of his father, a fine bluff old Arab who was very cordial. The store is principally a drug store but they also deal in pearls of which we saw a great many. One handful was valued at a lac of rupees. On the way out we passed a number of itinerant pearl vendors, also several men who were filing pearls to remove irregularities and improve their beauty. This is a rather risky process, for it is easily possible in this way to spoil a pearl altogether.

Had tiffin with the Dames and started back to the Barala. We were scheduled to sail at half past two but did not do so until six hours later.

(This concludes the extracts from the log of the Barala. The writer hopes at some later time to give some recollections of his very interesting visits to Kuwait and Basrah.)

Personalia

The Rev. Samuel M. Zwemer, D.D., arrived in New York from Cairo on June 6, 1921, having traveled via Smyrna, Constantinople and Paris. Dr. Zwemer will make his headquarters this summer with his family in Holland, Michigan.

Dr. and Mrs. C. S. G. Mylrea, arrived at Victoria, Canada, on June 7, 1921. They expect to spend the summer with the relatives in Seattle, Washington, their address being 88th Street and 15th Avenue, N. E. Dr. and Mrs. Mylrea traveled home by way of China and Japan, having spent several weeks with relatives in Korea.

Rev. James E. Moerdyk arrived at Boston on June 14, 1921, having come by direct steamer from Calcutta to Boston. Mr. Moerdyk will make his headquarters this summer at 535 Church Place, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Miss Charlotte B. Kellien, having completed her furlough, will return to the field during the month of October, taking the direct route from New York to Bombay on one of the steamers of the American-India Line. Miss Kellien will be accompanied by the Misses Ruth and Rachel Jackson and Miss Cornelia Dalenberg, under appointment to the Arabian Mission.

Miss Fanny Lutton is enjoying her furlough with relatives and friends in Australia.

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